

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE  
DISTRICT OF VERMONT

FILED  
U.S. DISTRICT COURT  
DISTRICT OF VERMONT  
01/06/25

In the Matter of:  
Mailing Criminal Documents  
Directly to Correctional Facilities

2:25-mc-3

**GENERAL ORDER NO. 123**

In an effort to prevent the misuse of court documents to identify government cooperators, to interfere with the integrity of criminal investigations and prosecutions, or to intimidate or attempt to intimidate or threaten the safety of an incarcerated individual, this General Order conditionally restricts court and chambers staff for the District of Vermont from sending or disseminating plea agreements, sentencing memorandums, presentence reports, and court transcripts (“Sentencing Materials”) directly to incarcerated individuals at correctional facilities after the individual’s conviction and sentencing for an offense in the District of Vermont. The District of Vermont has experienced a problem with individuals requesting copies of Sentencing Materials and directing court staff to send them to incarcerated individuals. This may allow circumvention of correctional facility guidelines because it appears to be legal mail sent by the court. As part of this General Order, Sentencing Materials may only be sent to the individual who requested them.

The court has adopted the Judicial Conference’s guidance for the protection against the potential exposure of government cooperators. This guidance recognizes that the court’s own procedures and the public nature of its proceedings may place inmates at risk for intimidation, coercion, extortion, violence, and retaliation because of cooperation.

In an effort to prevent a threat to the safety and well-being of incarcerated individuals and to preserve the integrity of criminal investigations and prosecutions, court and chambers staff for the District of Vermont shall not send or disseminate Sentencing Materials directly to inmates at correctional facilities EXCEPT in circumstances where the incarcerated individual is self-represented and pursuing a pending appeal, petition for habeas corpus, motion for post-conviction relief, or writ of mandamus in a court of competent jurisdiction. In that event, the court may redact information regarding cooperation, cooperators, and minor victims from the requested documents and shall require the requesting individual’s viewing of the requested documents to take place under correctional facility supervision or subject to the correctional facility’s rules and regulations regarding inmate possession of legal documents.

SO ORDERED.

Dated at Burlington, within the District of Vermont, this 6<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2025.

  
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Christina Reiss, Chief Judge